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MEDIA CONTACT: Adam Russo
adam@com616.com
616.350.4202

Nonprofit executive resigns

GRAND RAPIDS – Mich. – March 18, 2020 – Affinity Mentoring today announced the resignation of Laura Ward as executive director. Affinity Mentoring is a nonprofit that provides one-on-one mentoring relationships for students at Burton Elementary, Burton Middle School, Southwest Community Campus and Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center. Ward's last day will be May 22, 2020.

"It is with both gratitude and sadness that I share this news. I have decided to step back from my work because my family commands my full attention at this time. This has been a very difficult decision but is necessary in order to best care for my family," Ward said.

The Affinity Mentoring Board of Directors is conducting a search to find the new executive director.

Ward joined Affinity Mentoring as program director in 2011 and was promoted to executive director in 2016. Under her leadership, the organization increased student-mentor-matches from 120 to nearly 300. The organization also expanded the number of schools served from one to four. The Grand Rapids Chamber named Affinity Mentoring the 2019 Non-profit of the Year at its 10th annual EPIC Awards.

"I'm extremely proud of all that we have accomplished together. Affinity's team of board members, staff, mentors, students, school staff and community partners have all had a significant impact in the community and on my life and career," Ward said. "Without you, Affinity Mentoring would not be as strong and vibrant as it is."

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About Affinity Mentoring

Affinity Mentoring is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to interrupting the cycle of poverty through mentoring relationships. Affinity believes that high quality, long-term mentoring relationships are the avenue through which youth can achieve their full potential and break the cycle of poverty. Our vision is that every student has a caring adult mentor to help improve academics, social-emotional skills, and self-esteem. We partner with organizations, schools, corporations, and individuals to provide high quality, culturally responsive mentoring to school-age children. For more information, visit <https://affinitymentoring.org/>.